



REPUBLIC OF SURINAME



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND COOPERATION

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST CONSULTING SERVICES

Contracting Institution: **Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business en International Cooperation**

Country: **The Republic of Suriname**

Financing Institution: **The Inter-American Development Bank**

Project: **Foreign Investment and Export Promotion Program**

Sector: **Trade & Investment**

Abstract: **Expressions of Interest for contracting a Consulting Firm for the Implementation of a Supplier Development Pilot Program in Suriname**

Loan No.: **4801/OC-SU**

Contract / Bid no.: **SU-L1056-P00107 - 3.5.1**

Deadline: **May 8, 2026**

The Republic of Suriname, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation, has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), toward the cost of the Foreign Investment and Export Promotion Program (FIEPP, project no. SU-L1056), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include the following objectives:

The objective of this consultancy is to design and implement a pilot programme aimed at supporting businesses in Suriname — with special emphasis on women-owned and women-led enterprises — to integrate into the supply chains of large domestic and international corporations operating in Suriname. The programme shall be scalable and incorporate capacity-building, market linkages, mentorship, and policy recommendations to foster an enabling business environment.

The consultancy is expected to last for a period of six (6) months from the date of contract signing, with the implementation programme designed to run over no longer than six (6) months. At the end of the consultancy, participating supplier companies and supporting buyer corporations shall be aligned and ready to commence implementation.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation now invites eligible consulting consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. Specifically, Consultants should have proven experience in providing a full range of services The consulting firm (or consortium) must therefore demonstrate a proven track record in the design and implementation of supplier development, SME competitiveness, and local content programs in developing or emerging markets. The firm should combine international experience with a solid understanding of the Surinamese or regional business environment.

The Expression of Interest (EOI) does not have a specific format or template, but should include:

- i. a properly signed Letter of Interest (LOI) from the firm to participate in the assignment;
- ii. profile of the firm (including evidence of the requisite expertise and skills);
- iii. list of similar assignments executed during the last five (5) years;
- iv. proof of legal status of the firm.

Short lists shall comprise firms with a wide geographic spread not fewer than five (5) and not more than eight (8) eligible firms (GN-2350-15).

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: *Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank* GN-2350-15 and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the policies.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. For the purpose of establishing the short list, the nationality of a firm is that of the country in which it is legally incorporated or constituted and in the case of Joint Venture, the nationality of the firm appointed to represent it.

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the policies set out in the Inter-American Development Bank's Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (GN-2350-15), and the process is open to all eligible consultants as defined in those policies.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Consultants Quality Selection (CQS) method set out in the Consultant Policies.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 09.00 to 15.00 hours Suriname Time (SRT).

Expressions of interest must be delivered in written form by email to the address fiapp-bids@sita.sr by **May 8, 2026 before 15.00 hours SRT.**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation

Attn: Ms. Melissa Chin, Program Manager

Program Execution Unit

Foreign Investment and Export Promotion Program

Address: Suriname Investment & Trade Agency (SITA)

Brokopondolaan #97, Corner Mr. Jagernath Lachmonstraat,

Paramaribo, Suriname

Attachment: **Terms Of Reference**

Terms of Reference

Implementation of a Supplier Development Pilot Program in Suriname

1 BACKGROUND

The Suriname Investment and Trade Agency (SITA) was established by the Government through the State Decree of November 11, 2021, as the competent authority to attract, facilitate and improve export and investment flows in Suriname. The specific objectives of SITA are: i) attracting FDI greenfield and expansion projects to Suriname, ii) strengthening the capacity of both current exporters - to expand their export volumes, particularly those operating in non-extractive industries and services - and potential exporters who will export for the first time, and iii) promoting linkages between local and foreign companies.

An important part of SITA's mandate is the provision of support to businesses in Suriname in becoming suppliers to large domestic and international companies operating in Suriname. Recognizing the challenges faced by these businesses in accessing the supply chains of the large companies, SITA seeks to develop a structured programme that will equip local companies, particularly those led by women, with the necessary skills, networks, and opportunities to become competitive suppliers.

SITA believes that the best opportunities for women are likely to come from some of the sectors listed below.

- **Agriculture and Agribusiness:** Supplying fresh produce and agro-processed goods,
- **Manufacturing and Handicrafts:** Producing furniture, artisanal goods, and packaging solutions.
- **Hospitality and Tourism:** Catering, event management, and cultural products for hotels and tour operators.
- **Information and Communication Technology (ICT):** Digital marketing, BPO, software development, and cybersecurity services.
- **Professional Services:** Business consulting, legal advisory, accounting, and HR training.
- **Health and Wellness:** Producing organic skincare, providing wellness services, and medical supply distribution.

Based on the above SITA commissioned a survey among large companies to identify their current procurement behaviors and their willingness and ability to increase local content from domestic suppliers and the terms and conditions under which this would be feasible. The results of this survey, which is currently underway whose key output is a list of companies committed to working with SITA to increase local content, that will provide the necessary input to implement the actions detailed in this TOR. (See annex 1 to this TOR for a summary of the expected survey outcomes)

Should the Linkages Survey yield fewer than 10 committed buyer companies, the consultant shall collaborate with SITA to identify and recruit additional buyers through direct outreach or sector-specific incentives.

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY

The objective of this project is to design a pilot program aimed at supporting businesses (with special emphasis on those that are women-owned or women-led) and high potential individuals in Suriname to integrate into the supply chains of large domestic and international corporations. The program should be scalable and include capacity-building, market linkages, mentorship, and policy recommendations to foster an enabling business environment. At the end of the consultancy, participating companies and supporting large corporations should be lined up and ready to commence implementation:

3 SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant will undertake the tasks listed below. Note that during program implementation SITA staff should be closely involved and specific events created to ensure that they have the capacity to continue to develop and further implement the program following the end of the pilot.

3.1 CREATE A LIST OF POTENTIAL SUPPLIERS:

Using the results of the Linkages Survey outlined above, prepare and implement a recruitment campaign (TV, social media, SITA website) in partnership with SITA and other relevant stakeholders to recruit potential local suppliers (companies or cooperatives with special emphasis on those with female leadership) with profiles that meet the requirements of the potential purchasers. From a long list of all applicants, work with SITA to propose and implement a detailed filtering mechanism to produce a short list of up to 250 companies who may meet the identified criteria in the different sectors.

3.2 CONFIRM COMMITMENT FROM LARGE COMPANIES:

Based on the results from the Linkages Survey mentioned above, meet with the ‘buyer’ companies who agreed to participate in the program and confirm their interest and detailed requirements. Based on the detailed requirements received, work with SITA and other relevant stakeholders to review with each buyer company the shortlisted companies to produce a gap analysis which can be used for future support activities either by SITA or other government structures. At this stage there are several possible outcomes:

- a) Immediate introduction of a potential supplier to the buyer and the relationship is established
- b) Supplier is close to meeting requirements but needs some remedial support
- c) Buyer rejects the company for various reasons (previous relationship, reputation, significant lack of capacity)

3.3 DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT A TRAINING, MENTORING AND COACHING PROGRAM:

From the list of companies who have potential to become suppliers as identified by the buyers, design a structured program framework that outlines the key components, and an implementation timeline that meets the needs of both buyer and supplier companies. Where possible, buyer companies should be encouraged to support and participate in the program to maximize impact.

The program should be designed to be implemented over a period no longer than **9 months**, ensuring sufficient time for capacity-building, market engagement, and business growth. The framework should incorporate:

Selection of Participants: The consultant should ensure the suppliers and supporting buyers are aligned and ready to participate immediately upon programme launch.

A possible outline of the contents of the supplier development program could include the following elements. However, these are only suggestions. The consultant should design and implement an appropriate framework based on the specific needs of the participants, both suppliers and buyers. Note that the consultant should prioritize essential capacity-building training and support that may lead to certifications and market linkages as the core program components, with financial access and technology reviews implemented as supplementary activities based on participant needs and resource availability.

- Phase 1: Capacity-Building Training (First 2 months¹)
 - Business and financial management training
 - Supply chain readiness and compliance training
 - Quality standards
 - Digital literacy and e-commerce training
 - Technology Review: Assess technological capabilities of participating businesses, identify gaps, and recommend appropriate digital tools, equipment, and solutions to enhance efficiency and competitiveness.
 - The training program shall include modules tailored to address barriers commonly faced by women entrepreneurs (e.g., access to networks, childcare constraints, or gender bias in procurement).
- Phase 2: Market Linkages and Mentorship (months 3-6)
 - Mentorship programs pairing entrepreneurs with experienced business leaders ideally in the buying companies

¹ Note that these timeframes would be confirmed in the actual programs and could be shorter or longer

- Exposure to procurement and tendering opportunities.
- Phase 3: Financial Access and Support Mechanisms (months 4-6)
 - Developing linkages with financial institutions for credit and investment opportunities
 - Guidance on grant applications and alternative financing options
 - Providing tailored business support services to improve sustainability and competitiveness

3.4 DEVELOP A MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK:

Establish baseline data, key performance indicators (KPIs) and an impact assessment mechanism to measure the effectiveness of the program. In this context it will be important to report on the results achieved by women owned and women led companies as part of the overall program.

4 DELIVERABLES & PAYMENTS

The consultant is expected to deliver according to the table below which also links payments to deliverables.

Deliverable	Timing	Payment
1. Inception Report outlining the methodology and work plan.	week 2	20%
2. A report containing a longlist of potential supplier companies identified and filtered based on the recruitment exercise	week 4	
3. A report containing the shortlisted companies agreed with the buyer companies and a detailed outline of the training program	Week 6	20%
4. An interim report containing the results of the initial training and the progress made by potential suppliers in receiving contracts from buyers	Week 10	20%
5. Further report on the coaching and mentoring program, challenges identified and addressed, the results achieved.	Week 16	20%
6. Final report on the program, the lessons learned, the results achieved and recommendations for future supplier development/local content initiatives.	Week 24	20%

4.1 REIMBURSABLES

Reimbursables will be paid on actual costs incurred, up to the contract amount, and can only be invoiced with receipts

5 DURATION AND TIMELINE

The consultancy is expected to last for a period of **6 months** from the date of contract signing with the consultant providing recommendations for scaling or repeating the program in the final report.

A detailed timeline will be agreed upon during the inception phase.

5.1 TEAM LOCATION CONSIDERATIONS

Given the need for a deep understanding of Suriname's business dynamics, it is highly recommended that the **Team Leader and relevant international key experts** spend at least 40% of staff time in Suriname with the possibility to adjust based on program needs and the effectiveness of virtual communications. The Team Leader's presence will ensure consistent coordination with local stakeholders and provide a continuous on-the-ground perspective and allows the team to engage in direct consultations with key stakeholders as the program develops.

5.2 DOWNSTREAM WORK

There is potential for downstream work associated with this assignment. Based on the satisfactory performance of this contract consultants may be asked to provide additional services linked to the activities in this TOR.

6 CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The Government expects that the Offeror will successfully perform the required services. The consulting firm (or consortium) must therefore demonstrate a proven track record in the design and implementation of supplier development, SME competitiveness, and local content programs in developing or emerging markets. The firm should combine international experience with a solid understanding of the Surinamese or regional business environment.

The firm shall demonstrate:

- At least 10 years of experience in SME upgrading and supply-chain integration assignments.
- Experience in addressing A2F challenges for SME's
- Proven capacity in training, mentoring, and coaching SMEs, including women-owned or women-led enterprises.
- Experience in market linkage and buyer engagement, and facilitation of SME access to finance.
- Strong internal capacity for monitoring and evaluation, communications, and stakeholder outreach.
- Ability to field a multidisciplinary team with appropriate sectoral expertise and ensure meaningful in-country presence during implementation.

The team profile for this exercise should include local and international consultants with a range of expertise that can be called down on a short-term basis to provide virtual inputs to address specific opportunities or challenges. The Consultant shall propose a technical approach and methodology that demonstrate a clear understanding of the assignment context and the need for a practical, demand-driven supplier development program. The approach must show how activities will be aligned with the capacity needs of local suppliers and the procurement requirements of participating buyer companies, while incorporating targeted strategies for engaging and supporting women-owned and women-led enterprises. The methodology must clearly explain how risks to successful delivery will be minimized, including by outlining realistic assumptions, feasible implementation steps, and mechanisms to ensure effective knowledge transfer to SITA.

The proposal shall include a workplan that translates the methodology into a logical and achievable sequence of activities over the nine-month period. The workplan must specify timelines, key milestones, interdependencies, and deliverable submission dates, and should demonstrate that the proposed sequence can be effectively managed with the resources and time allocated. The workplan should highlight points where progress will be reviewed and adapted if needed to reduce risks of delay, misalignment with buyer needs, or low supplier participation.

The Consultant shall also present an organization and staffing plan that ensures the assignment can be delivered reliably and with minimal execution risk. The team composition must demonstrate relevant technical expertise, appropriate seniority of the Team Leader, and sufficient on-the-ground presence in Suriname to maintain stakeholder engagement. The plan must clearly define roles and responsibilities for key experts, non-key experts, and administrative support staff, including coordination, logistics, communications, and documentation support. The proposal should show how the combination of technical expertise, local context knowledge, and dedicated administrative capacity contributes to operational feasibility and reduces the risk of unsuccessful completion.

6.1 TEAM LEADER

- Advanced degree in Business, Economics, or related field
- 10+ years' experience in business development and supply chain management
- Experience in emerging markets and supplier linkage programs
- Knowledge of Suriname business environment and its key players an advantage
- Experience in promoting gender-based business development programs an advantage

6.2 SUPPLY CHAIN AND PROCUREMENT EXPERT

- Bachelor's degree in Business, Engineering or related field
- 7+ years in procurement and supply chain management and business support programs

- Experience working with SMEs and large corporations
- Experience in developing supplier development training programs
- Experience in developing SME coaching and mentoring programs

6.3 FINANCIAL INCLUSION SPECIALIST

- Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Finance, Accounting or a related field
- 7+ years experience in SME financing and investment readiness.
- Specific experience on women's financing needs is an added advantage
- Experience working with banks, microfinance institutions, and impact investors

6.4 COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH SPECIALIST

- Bachelor's degree in Business, Media, PR or related topic
- 5 years' experience in marketing and PR including promotion of programs using social media
- Good network among local media owners, journalists and influencers

6.5 LOCAL COORDINATOR

- Bachelor's degree in business or a related subject
- At least 5 years experience in business facilitation, logistics, and stakeholder engagement in Suriname
- Good network across the business community
- (International) Project Management Certification would be an asset

Although not key experts, the Consultant should demonstrate to have the following experts in-house or is able to mobilize them within 3 business days notice. This should be included in the organization and staffing plan. The following short-term expert inputs should be available for call down:

- M&E Specialist
- Agribusiness Specialist, Food Safety Expert
- Production & Quality Control Specialist
- Hospitality Business Consultant
- Digital Transformation Specialist
- Business Compliance & Certification Expert
- Regulatory & Market Access Consultant

Annex 1: Key Information from the Linkages Survey

1 OVERVIEW OF EXISTING LOCAL CONTENT INITIATIVES

- A documented list of current public, donor, philanthropic, or company-led initiatives promoting local content, with a spotlight on those targeting women. Includes actions taken, budgets, sectors covered, results achieved, and lessons learned.
- Highlights successful strategies (e.g., training models, funding mechanisms) and pitfalls (e.g., lack of buyer engagement) to adopt or avoid.
- Identifies gaps where the Supplier Development Program can add value, particularly for women-led businesses.

2 PROCUREMENT NEEDS OF LARGE COMPANIES

- Detailed findings from a survey of at least 100 large domestic, exporting, and foreign-owned companies across the specified sectors, covering:
 - Current Procurement & Imports : List of key goods/services imported, with annual volumes/values and specifications (e.g., standards, materials).
 - Supplier Requirements : Minimum quality/compliance standards (e.g., ISO, HACCP), preferred certifications, payment terms, and logistics needs (e.g., delivery, packaging).
 - Willingness to Source Locally : Challenges with local suppliers (e.g., capacity, reliability), expectations for new suppliers, and support offered (e.g., training, mentoring).
 - Future Plans : Expansion intentions for local sourcing and estimated onboarding timelines.
 - Specifies exact goods/services (e.g., fresh produce, software solutions) that suppliers can target.
 - Defines buyer criteria (e.g., certifications, credit terms) to shape supplier training and qualification processes.
 - Flags barriers (e.g., quality gaps) and buyer support (e.g., mentorship) to leverage in program design.

3 CONFIRMED LOCAL CONTENT PARTNERSHIPS

- A list of 10 large companies committed to a linkages program, with detailed procurement needs (specific goods/services, volumes, quality standards) and sector diversity ensured.
- Provides a ready pool of buyers to engage immediately, with precise requirements for supplier matching.
- Ensures sectoral coverage to prioritize recruitment in agriculture, ICT, etc.
- Serves as the program's roadmap, detailing buyer-approved opportunities to focus capacity-building efforts.
- Highlights women-specific prospects to align with SITA's gender priority.

4 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consolidates all findings into a stakeholder presentation, including:
 - Snapshot of procurement gaps and partnership commitments.
 - Lessons from existing initiatives and survey insights.
 - Recommendations for program success (e.g., prioritize compliance training, leverage buyer mentorship).
 - Offers a high-level guide for structuring the Supplier Development Program over 9-15 months.
 - Suggests practical next steps based on real data and stakeholder input.